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NERVOUS DEPRESSION.

Nor many of the present generation belong to that fortunate class who boast that they were 'born before nerves were invented.' On the contrary, there is in these days a very general acquaintance with their power, and sometimes a very distressing familiarity with the suffering they can inflict. The favoured few who know little or nothing about them, find it hard to believe how real and how severe this suffering often is. If a man breaks his leg or has a fever, they can understand that there is something the matter with him; but if his complaint is 'on the nerves,' they sometimes rather hastily conclude that it is altogether a trivial matter, and perhaps exists entirely in the sufferer's imagination. This has often led to the infliction of great cruelty, in aggravating, by contemptuous and unjust censure, what was already sufficiently hard to bear. No doubt there may be spurious forms of this disorder, as of some others. Fine ladies may have 'the vapours' for want of an occupation; but this in no way proves that nervous depression in general is fancied and fictitious. It is as real a complaint as consumption or scarlet fever, and as little to be trifled with.

Strange details of nervous impressions could be given by sufferers, and those who have received their confidences. A lady assured us that she at one time used constantly to hurry past a high wall or building, lest it should fall upon her. Another, that she would stand trembling with her hand upon her schoolroom door, summoning all her resolution to sustain her in the effort to go in to give her pupils their ordinary lessons. And the prospect of a journey, even though short, has been most formidable, indeed terrible, to persons in this condition. Apprehensions of all kinds are common symptoms, from groundless alarms of robbers in the night to forebodings of every possible disaster to body or mind. And these are sometimes accompanied by sensations or affections which are merely physical, such as giddiness, nausea, trembling, or palpitation. The

victims constantly complain that life is a burden. Now the first thing for nervous sufferers to do is to accept two facts—first, that their complaint is curable, and second, that the chief part of the cure rests with themselves. If they 'give way' and 'give up,' they may go from bad to worse. If they will strive resolutely and take proper means, they may live to smile at their past troubles.

First of all, there is very often an undue strain upon the system, which ought to be lightened. We speak now of workers, and specially of brain-workers. The human machine is like a clock; it requires weights to keep it going. But in these days the weights are often too large and heavy, and strain the machinery. In cases of nervous depression, they may need to be reduced by perhaps a tour or a short trip, according to circumstances; a sea-breeze, a blow of mountain-air, a glimpse at the Rhine and Switzerland, and back again to moderate work. If the occupation followed be unhealthy or too exciting, a change of pursuit may be imperative. But to release the sufferer from all duties would be a cruel kindness; idleness is a very hotbed for morbid growths of every kind. Residence too is a point not to be lost sight of; a low-lying damp locality is of course unfavourable. So is one with very gloomy surroundings or associations.

The spring is often a trying season to those who are not strong, and especially to sufferers from nervous depression: they find their painful sensations strangely aggravated without any apparent cause, and are sometimes ready to conclude the worst. It is well for them at such times to remember the old saw, 'Frightened is half-killed,' and to reassure themselves by the simple fact that they are but feeling acutely what others also feel, though in a lesser degree.

An unhealthy or too sedentary occupation contributes to nervous depression; and if it cannot be exchanged for a better, should be varied and relieved as far as possible. There is constantly, indeed usually, some weakness of digestion, requiring care in the diet, for dyspepsia is often almost

the sole origin if not the whole of the complaint. The use of a suitable tonic is generally desirable: often a very simple one is preferable—quinine and iron, or some such mild aids to appetite and assimilation. Some medical men prefer pepsine and similar preparations; others use strychnia, phosphorus, zinc, and various formidable drugs. Only, whatever medicine is used, let it be prescribed by a qualified practitioner, and the ablest you know. Above all, no quacks. Fresh air, cold water, and plenty of exercise, will do the nervously depressed more good than physic. The exercise, however, should not be violent; and the cold-water treatment should be moderate and rational: plunges and other shocks are most undesirable. Sponging and brisk washing and rubbing are in every way helpful. The improved, gentler system of hydropathic treatment is well suited for really nervous patients. But, as he hopes for recovery, let the nervous sufferer avoid resorting to alcoholic stimulants for relief: these are certain to retard his cure, and very likely to entangle him in dangerous habits. The momentary elation, followed as it commonly is by the certain and often severe reaction, is among the worst things possible for an enfeebled nervous system. If any one suffering in this way cannot entirely dispense with stimulants, let him or her be assured that the daily allowance had far better be diminished than increased. In proportion as the patient depends upon stimulants for support, will the process of recovery be longer and more difficult. And the same remark is perhaps equally applicable to opiates and sedatives. To meddle with these is to play with edge-tools. Whatever temporary gain there may be in their use, is too often counterbalanced, and far more than counterbalanced by the subsequent reaction and prostration—the very things which of all others nervous patients are most concerned to avoid.

And now we come back to a truth which we scarcely expect such sufferers to accept readily, but which is nevertheless beyond question—the chief part of the cure lies with the patient. Not all, but by far the most important, and the hardest. Change, exercise, fresh air, diet, tonic—all these together will not cure any one who gives up and gives way. The aim of the patient must be to disregard and even defy his sensations, impressions, languor, or whatever form his sufferings may take, and just go on as usual, doing all he can to forget self. Nervous people often rally wonderfully under pleasant excitement, sometimes even under sudden trial. They surprise their friends by their activity and endurance, and accomplish the otherwise impossible. Let us illustrate our meaning in one or two particulars. Suppose a patient so severely depressed that he can hardly be persuaded to move; he must begin—he must try. Let him summon all his energy and self-command; let him walk round his garden, or fifty yards on the road to-day, and return satisfied that he can at least do so much. The next day let him go farther—twice round or more, a hundred yards along the road, and so on; daily increasing his self-appointed task, and daily proving to himself that he really can do what he once thought or feared he could not do. The same principle applies to other efforts, according to the form of the malady. Persevere in resolute resistance to the difficulty,

whatever it may be; and use each victory, or degree of victory, as a step towards further advances. No brooding over troubles and watching for symptoms. Giving up is fatal; resolution and hope gain the victory, with the help of Providence. And even as to fears, forebodings, and so forth, the same direction, in substance, will apply. A lady told the writer that after a period of acute suffering from various apprehensions, she one day said to herself: 'Now I have long been fearing all sorts of things, and they do not come; I have had all manner of distress, and dreaded what has never yet happened. Nothing that I have been so alarmed about has really occurred. I will allow these tormenting fears no longer.' And she resolutely dismissed her apprehensions. Like the thinker who

Fought his doubts, and gathered strength,

she strove against, and in time overcame her gloomy and groundless forebodings, and now lives to encourage others, to preach hope and cheerfulness and trust. To tell a nervous sufferer that there is nothing whatever the matter with him, is most cruel, and far from true. To tell him that he must be his own best doctor, and that much of his cure lies in his own hands, is the simple truth, and ought not to be at all discouraging, but rather the reverse.

Not a few of the habits of modern life strain the nervous system considerably; hurry and excitement are far too prevalent. 'Taking things coolly' should be at least endeavoured by those who may have much in their work calculated to stimulate the mind or the feelings. Excess of any kind is constantly the parent of nervous depression. So too are exciting amusements, such as gambling. Too much novel-reading is an unsuspected but often very powerful contributing cause. Overwork, alas! is one which it is not so easy to remedy as to denounce.

Little to earn and many to keep,

often strains the nerves and brain too heavily. What is sometimes ridiculed as 'a hobby' is of the greatest use to hard-worked men: music, gardening, a lathe, even rabbits or canaries will serve the purpose. The hobby should be readily accessible, and for most people inexpensive; but it should involve an entire change of thought and occupation, and be as little connected as possible with the individual's ordinary business or pursuit. A good hobby is often a wonderful relief to the over-taxed mind. Too little exercise and too much tea ruin the nerves of many a woman. Men often try theirs by indulging too freely in the use of tobacco. Young men and, above all, growing lads are very unwise if they employ tobacco at all. Their elders have more excuse; but the vigour of youth cannot require it, and certainly will not profit by it. The diabolical cruelty of frightening young children is almost certain to sow the seeds of nervous weakness; so does harsh treatment in later childhood. And over-driving and harassing young lads and girls, whether at books or work, all tends in the same direction. Competitive examinations have to answer for some cases of enfeebled nerves.

Simple habits, moderation in all things, cheerful amusements or pastimes, and reasonable care, will go far to prevent nervousness. But when,

through ignorance, indiscretion, hereditary tendency, or affliction, it has been developed, the sufferer will do well to give all heed to the foregoing hints, and to take for his motto—Hope on, hope ever.

A LIFE'S ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XIV.—HISTORY.

You do not need the sanctities of love to hold you pure in heart, as I do.

FRANK'S picture occupies the place of honour on the walls of the Winter Exhibition of the Associated Brotherhood of British Artists. A clique of Frank's friends and admirers go about town proclaiming the advent of a new Turner; whilst a clique of his detractors go about town proclaiming Frank an impostor, and his picture a pretentious failure. In my capacity as story-teller I have a right to a voice in this matter; and I may take leave to say that the picture is a good picture, and is very near being a great one, and that only a man of genius could have painted it. The World of Fashion, interesting itself in the affairs of British Art, is divided into hostile camps upon this question; and Frank becomes a Lion, roaring mildly in many drawing-rooms; and being growled at in many others, by lesser Lions envious of his fortune. In this mixed world there are many artists who are not gentlemen, just as there are many gentlemen who are not artists. It is not surprising, therefore, since envy is a human passion, that some few should go about to accentuate the young fellow's triumph by sneering at him as one who paints with ease to shew his breeding. Frank is not without a sense of humour; and since he never envied mortal man anything, and envy cannot sting him, he takes the detraction good-humouredly, and the worship with more inward humility than might be believed.

It is a matter to be thankful for that in this world the best truths are the tritest. We have reason to be thankful that sin brings punishment in its train. If punishment hang fire or miss, it will be the worse for us. If I sin, let retribution lay a hand upon me, that I may thereafter live cleanly and learn wisdom. But let it be that the wisdom shall be early learned, for that man's lot in life is terrible from whom sorrow slips like water, and who, so, needs to be drowned in it before his heart is cleansed. I have laboured but in vain to paint this man if I have not shewn already that with him remorse is the gate which leads to folly, as surely as folly is the gate which leads to remorse, and that for him there must be something little less than a convulsion of the universe before he escapes that demon's circle. Since the night when last we saw him, remorse has been busy with him, and he has made a strenuous effort against himself, and has for the most part succeeded in keeping out of harm's way. It is a good sign in him that praise humiliates him inwardly. Most of all he is humbled by Maud's innocent triumph and gratulation, conveyed by the liveried Cupid of the penny-post, and breathing completest faith and love. He wears the locket which holds her portrait at his heart, and believes in it as a talisman, to save him from all wrong. And now he has been for so long a time upon the straight path, that but for his last folly he would be quite happy and contented.

On the evening of the first day of the Exhibition he had met the Secretary, a sad-eyed and mournful-mannered man, who was conspicuous as wearing the most shockingly bad hat in London. 'Let me congratulate you, Fairholt,' said the Secretary, speaking as dolefully as though he were bidding farewell before transportation. 'Lord Chesterwood wants your picture, and will give your price for it. I met him an hour after the place had closed.'

'I'm glad to know that Chesterwood likes it well enough to buy it; but I am sorry that I was stupid enough to forget to inform you that it is sold already. It was sold before the Exhibition opened.'

'You're a lucky fellow, Fairholt,' said the Secretary. 'I'll tell his lordship. Would you take a commission for a replica?'

'Not a replica,' Frank answered. 'A new work, if you like—and if Chesterwood care for one.'

With that they parted; and Frank strolling homewards, began to think that he had acted foolishly. Tasker's bill for ninety-eight pounds ten shillings was due in three days' time, and he had nothing in hand to meet it with.

'I must look Hastings up,' he said to himself; 'and either assure myself that his man is certain, or go back to the Secretary and accept Chesterwood's offer at once.'

He called a hansom, and drove to Hastings' rooms. 'I say,' he cried, bursting in suddenly—'about that fellow who was to buy my picture?'

'What about him?' answered Hastings, turning languidly on his couch. 'Is he gathered to his fathers? Has he gone a cropper on 'Change?'

'I have come to you,' said Frank, speaking seriously, 'to ask you about him. It is a matter of vital importance, Hastings. That bill of Tasker's is due in three days. I have just had an offer for the picture from Lord Chesterwood; and if I am not absolutely sure of your man, I must accept it. Now, is your man safe to buy the picture, and safe to pay at once?'

'I should say,' responded Hastings with great gravity, 'that so far as the possession of coin goes, the Bank of England is a fool to him. And I should be inclined to fancy that if he lost the chance of buying that particular picture, this hollow world could provide him with no future joy. That indeed is my deliberate conviction.'

'Will you tell me who it is?' Frank asked.

'An oath, an oath!' said Hastings with placid languor. 'Shall I lay perjury upon my soul? No; not for Venice!'

'Will you undertake to see the man to-morrow,' Frank urged, 'and ascertain if everything is right, and if his will to buy the picture holds good?'

'Before the morning dew has pleached the lawn,' said Hastings.

'You unpatedent Irritator,' cried Frank, shaking him. 'Will you go?'

'Yes; I will,' said the Irritator. 'If not so swift as friendship's heart could hope, as fast as a four-wheeler can carry me.'

'When will you let me know?'

'Before the clock hath struck the hour of noon.'

'That's a promise?'

'And shall be a performance.'

The two shook hands; and Frank regaining his

cab, drove home to dress, and then drove westward to be lionised.

At an hour much earlier than that at which he usually arose, Hastings took his way to Acre Buildings, City, and was admitted to the presence of Mr Tasker, who received him with much cordiality. 'I have called,' said Hastings, business-like for once, 'to ask you about that picture of Fairholt's. I know very well that you have a grudge against him, my chosen one; but you mustn't gratify it yet. With a bill against Fairholt in one hand, and a cheque in his favour in the other, you might be inclined to be mischievous. Have you a genuine commission to buy the picture?'

For a second, Tasker felt as though his ground were slipping from beneath him. The usurer needed time to think a little. There could be no harm in letting Hastings see the intending purchaser's name. He made no answer, but rummaged over a file which he took from an iron safe, and having found the letter for which he sought, handed it over to Hastings. The letter was dated from Hartley Hall, and was signed by Benjamin Hartley. It set forth that since the writer designed a surprise for the artist, it was his wish that the purchaser's name should be kept completely in the dark, and it authorised Tasker to offer four hundred guineas for the picture. Whilst Hastings read this over, Tasker produced a copying-book from the press, and laid before him a copy of his own reply to his patron's missive. Hastings read that also, and professed himself satisfied.

'You won't break your bond with me, Mr Hastings?' said Tasker when he had put away the letters.

'A scrupulous adherence to veracity is my sole virtue,' Mr Hastings responded, with a return to his common manner.

'Yes, I know,' said Tasker, to whom that sentiment might as well have been set forth in Greek; 'but you will keep your promise?'

'Have I not told thee so, thou Hebrew Jew?' said Hastings, seating himself upon the edge of the table.

'Very well—very well,' returned Tasker, waving his hands in a manner half-deprecatory, half-submissive. 'You say what you like to me; but I will brove that I am your friend. There is drouble in store for you, Mr Hastings.'

'Your argument is cogent, my Israelite,' said Hastings. 'Experience has taught me to trace the filmy nexus which is here revealed. It's a singular thing, Tasker, that I never *had* a friend who didn't say that trouble *was* in store for me. Your advancement of that statement is at once admitted as an admirable augury of the most friendly intentions. I invite you to notice that that sentence is rather well turned than otherwise.'

'You are going to be in great drouble,' said Tasker gravely, 'unless we both dake great gare of you.'

'Then let the stricken deer go weep,' quoth Hastings, and lit a cigar.

'Mr Hastings,' said Tasker below his breath, 'I have been in a great difficulties, and I have had to sell every acceptance that was in my hands.'

'Good,' said the other with an air of approval.

'I have been gompelled to sell yours with the

others. And the gentleman was here yesterday to say that he meant to go for you. Now, Mr Hastings, this is not my fault. I am a money-lender; but I am not a scoundrel.'

'A nice distinction,' Hastings murmured, as if to himself.

'I break my faith by giving you warning. But if you do not wish to be in trouble, you had better be out of the way for a little while. I can only advise you; but I could not help it. I was obliged to sell.'

Hastings made no response to Tasker's advice or to his professions of sorrow, but surveyed him with quiet indifference, as though the matter in discussion had no possible concern for him.

'What do you think you shall do?' Tasker asked after a pause.

'I think I shall clear out somewhere, and I think I shall ask you to let me have the money to do it with.'

'I cannot let you have much,' said Tasker; 'but I must do my best.'

Then the two set to work to settle the amount on which Hastings should start for Boulogne, since to that refuge for the oppressed he chose for the moment to fly. It was settled that Tasker should send a weekly remittance so long as he should adjudge it necessary for Hastings to remain abroad, and by way of a beginning that gentleman drew twenty pounds, and made his way merrily to Fairholt's chambers.

'All goes well,' he told Frank. 'I have seen the agent, and I have read the letter of the principal. I suppose you will get your cheque to-morrow or next day.'

'For once intelligible and direct,' cried the artist, clapping him on the shoulder.

'Yes,' said Hastings; 'it's all square, old man, and you may rely upon it.'

'Better and better!' cried Frank, laughing. 'What has worked this conversational conversion?'

'Should you hold the Koh-i-noor—the Fountain of Light itself,' said Hastings with solemnity, 'above the flame of a farthing rushlight, its sparkle would be lost. Rub it even with a damp sponge, and its brilliance partially returns. In this little allegory, I appear as the Fountain of Light, you as the damp sponge, and a city agent as the farthing candle. Adieu!'

Hastings went his way; and Frank, easy and satisfied in mind, sat down and penned to Maud the last letter he ever wrote to her. He set down all his hopes and all his love in that letter, not guessing that it was love's last legacy to love. How should he guess it? I cannot tell but before this ink is dry some stroke of terror may have fallen on me. Nor can you who sit at ease beside your fire and read this story make the baldest guess at what the next sixty seconds may do for you. But the proverb is something musty.

'If I were not sure,' Frank wrote, 'that you love me as truly as I love you, I should despair of telling you one thousandth part of what you are to me. And as it is, I shall never tell you all. You do not need the sanctities of love to hold you pure in heart, as I do. Though you loved me as woman never loved man before, you can have no such need of me as I have of you. I shall never have courage to tell you of the follies from which

you raised me ; of the things, worse than follies, from which your love has had power to save me. And I believe, dearest, that if it be possible that by any swift temptation—as God knows, it is possible for most men—I should fall from your good hopes of me, the thought that you had loved me once would draw me back again to penitence and honour. Forgive me if I vex you by throwing even a hint of possible mud upon your idol. If that idol were any other human creature, you should believe in him in peace for me ; but you can scarcely guess, Maud, how humble and how undeserving I feel before you. I can bring you nothing that makes me worth your having except my love. But I bring that in full measure, pressed down and running over. I am all yours now, and till I die.' This and more he wrote in true love and penitence and out of the fullness of his heart. There were maulier purposes within him then, than he had ever known before.

At lovers' perjuries, Jove laughs. Ay, well ! But if Jove laugh at the vows by which love pledges itself to truth and honour for love's holy sake, or at their woful breaking, then let the meanest creature of the fields deride his thunder. I, for one, will have no such Jove astride on my Olympus.

Frank having despatched his letter, rested with good heart and hope, purposing to make the discharge of Tasker's bill his last business in town. He had no anxieties about that matter. The date for the arrival of the cheque and that for the payment of the bill ran each other a little close, to be sure ; but then there was the time-honoured three days' grace, and he had Hastings' full assurance of the *bona fides* of the unknown purchaser. But the day of reckoning came and went, and no cheque reached him. He went to look for Hastings, and found that he had left town and had given no address. Then, sorely against the grain, he went to visit Tasker. The money-lender lay in wait for him.

'I must ask you,' said Frank, 'to renew that bill for a month.'

Tasker regretted politely that it was not possible. He was already almost a ruined man—he had not twenty pounds in the world. He set forth these statements with more sorrow for Mr Vairhold than for himself. He would have liked to have helped the gentleman.

'This is all nonsense, of course,' said Frank. 'I suppose you want a heavier interest. How much do you want ?'

No ; Tasker wanted nothing but his money. He was broken—he was ruined. There was nothing before him but the workhouse.

'Make the bill a hundred and twenty-five, and make it payable in a month !' Frank asked.

No ; it was not possible. Tasker actually turned his back upon him, and sorted a set of dusty papers.

'Make it a hundred and fifty, payable in a month,' Frank urged.

Then Tasker turned, with insolent triumph peering through humility. Was the gentleman deaf ? It had been said already that the thing was impossible. Tasker wanted his money, and nothing but his money. He was bankrupt without it, and he must have it.

'I am in hourly expectation of more than four hundred pounds,' Frank pleaded.

Tasker trusted it would arrive in time to prevent any unpleasantness, holding meanwhile in his hand the pocket-book which held Benjamin Hartley's cheque in favour of Frank Fairholt for four hundred guineas. It would not be easy to say how much Mr Tasker enjoyed this stroke of vengeance.

'What shall you do if the bill is allowed to be finally dishonoured ?' Frank asked him.

Tasker—with the joy of gratified malice brightening his eyes and creasing his lips into their own carnivorous smile, in spite of all he could do to clothe his face in proper sadness—regretted deeply that he could only get some wealthy friend to take it up and appeal to Frank's family.

'If you can get any one to take it up, bring him to me, and I will pay him any reasonable sum he may ask to renew it.'

Then Tasker landed his final blow. 'I have told you already, Mr Vairhold, that I am almost a ruined man. Well now you shall know. I am quite ruined. I cannot help it. I have sold your bill into other hands. It is not in my hands any longer ; I have nothing more with it.'

Frank regarded him for a minute sternly and thoughtfully. 'You want your revenge for the insult I put upon you last summer,' he said quietly, but with a feeling of hopeless desperation. 'Is that it ?'

'Look you, Mr Vairhold,' said Tasker, laying his hand on Frank's sleeve, 'if I could'—

'Stand back, if you please,' said Frank quietly, regarding the smile which now shone unrestrained on Tasker's face.

'If I could pay myself,' Tasker began again, retiring a little, 'for the money I have lent, I should not care about revenge. But I will have one or the other. If my friend comes to me and says : "You have sold me a rotten bill, and told me it was a good one," then I will not spare you—no, not a minute. Look you, my young friend'—Tasker laid a hand on Frank's arm again.

The words, the smile, the touch roused Frank into the feeling of disgusted rage one feels at an intruding snake, and in his instinctive passion he struck the Jew across the face with the cane he carried in his hand.

Tasker sprang back with a yell which brought in the office-boy. 'Fetch a policeman !' screamed Tasker with a face livid with rage, except for the red bar across his cheek. Frank sat down with blind passion surging in his heart. Tasker placed his back against the door and glared at Frank, who took up a newspaper from the table and made a feint of reading it. In a minute or two the boy returned with an officer, who listened with imperturbable official calm to Tasker's statement, and then turned to Frank.

'I have punished this person for a gross impertinence,' said that young gentleman with quiet hauteur. 'There is my card, officer. I shall be quite ready to appear at the proper time and place.'

'Very good, sir,' said the officer.

'Take him in charge !' Tasker screamed—'take him in charge !'

'You have my address,' Frank said quietly to the policeman.

'You'd better summons the gentleman,' said the officer to Tasker.

'No!' Tasker screamed; 'he shall go to prison.'

The official smiled; and Frank walked unmolested from the room and into the street.

Tasker threatened to report the officer for refusing to do his duty. The officer, with sublime calm, asked if Tasker had the gentleman's address. Yes; he had. Very well then; so had the officer. And with that the officer also walked down-stairs and into the street. Tasker raged alone, and swore to a thousand horrible revenges. But when his mood cooled a little, he rejoiced savagely that Frank had given him thus a further chance for revenge. He could guess pretty well what it would be to Frank to have his name dragged first through the mud of a trial for assault, on a police-court summons, and next through the daily columns of the press. He ground his teeth and clenched his hands in savage exultation over that charming prospect. With a passion of rejoicing hatred, he took from his pocket-book the cheque for four hundred guineas, and gloated over it.

That Frank should regret the violence into which the passion of the moment had betrayed him, was inevitable; but his regret brought but little added pain to him. Now that he knew how inexorable Tasker had meant to be from the first, he saw that with or without the blow his case was hopeless so far as the money-lender's influence could go. He was torn with suspense and anguish. The trouble of this unhappy bill magnified itself until it assumed gigantic proportions. Unless it could be met, his father and his brother would each see how he had gone back from his better promises. Maud too—might it not reach her ears? There was an almost unbearable horror in the thought. He had promised so much—he had meant so well—he had fought so hard against the temptations which beset him, and now, a single night of folly had brought him to this. How could he have been such an insensate fool as to place himself in this man's clutches after having purposely insulted him. O fool! he groaned. Money borrowed drunkenly to pay a gambling debt. A debt contracted too in such a place and with such people. Could he go down and see Will, and make a clean breast of it, and beg him once more to help him? There was scarcely time for that; but even if there had been, how could he so humiliate himself? No, no, no, no! A thousand times, No!

There was yet one loophole of escape. To trust longer to the possible receipt of a cheque from a man whose name he did not even know, was out of the question. That had been madness from the first. That hope was the weakest of all broken reeds, and he could lean no longer on it. But there was still Lord Chesterwood's offer, and its recollection came upon him as a ray of light might fall upon the way of safety to one who lay awaiting death in the dark. He arranged his disordered hair and dress, and hurried to the building in which the Exhibition was held. There he found the Secretary, and as calmly as he could set before him the fact that the contract for the picture of which he had spoken had been made with a man upon whom he could not depend. He should be delighted to sell the picture at once to Lord Chesterwood. His lordship, the Secretary said, had gone on public business to St Petersburg.

Hadn't Frank seen that in the papers?—No! How very singular. Great pity to deal with unsafe men. Quite easy to demand a cheque in advance. Lots of people did it, and— Good-day, Fairholt.

No hope—no hope now. Was there any chance of finding Hastings? Away to his rooms once more. No news of him or of his whereabouts. Frank went home again, and poured out a great tumbler of brandy, and drank it. Then he sat down to think; but thought was insupportable. The thought of his father's distress, his brother's contempt—and of Maud—O Maud, Maud!—and all her love for him tried by this vile revelation, and her heart bruised by it—it was all too terrible. He took up his pen, and tried to write to his father, and tell him of the miseries which surrounded him, and how they arose. He would have to know, and it was better that he should hear from the culprit—the criminal—yes, the criminal—himself. But Frank tore up letter after letter, and at last gave up all attempt to perform that bitter task. After a while, he poured out another glass of brandy and drank it, put on his hat and overcoat, and wandered aimlessly out into the rain. The winter afternoon was closing in, and the lamps were already gleaming ghastly in the fading light. It was all the same to him where he walked, and he gave no heed to the direction in which he travelled. His feet kept pace with his own fierce and bitter thoughts. But a man must walk fast indeed to outwalk his sorrows. To-morrow, this Nemesis of his folly would be upon him. If Fate's hand could have fallen then, striking him dead, he would have esteemed himself happy if only he could have been saved this cruel but well-earned shame, and if they who loved him could have been spared the anguish of seeing him so shamed.

I have been looking at this trouble through his eyes, and not my own, all this time. The trouble was not so vast as it seemed to him; but it is easy to philosophise on others' sorrows—even for a fool—hard as it is for the man who suffers to bear his suffering calmly even though he be a philosopher. And poor Frank, with no one near him to philosophise for him, and with no power of self-control within him, went the way on which his own desperation led him. And that way was all the more piteous and desperate because all that was good in him prompted him against it, whilst all that was weak in him beckoned him inexorably on.

C A V E S.

IN the time when the study of natural phenomena was a strange compound of superstition and mythological tradition, the condition of the interior of the earth was a favourite theme of conjecture and speculation. The globe was supposed to be hollow, and to be tenanted by inhabitants suited to an underground existence, whose lives were cheered by the presence of special planets, and whose wants were supplied by a fauna and flora as complete as those enjoyed by ourselves. An entrance to this subterranean world was to be found somewhere in the Arctic regions—which being the part of our globe least easy of access, was perhaps the safest place in which to define the geographical position of that

fabulous hole. The fact that Humboldt was asked to undertake a search after this imaginary cavity in the earth's crust, will shew that these strange superstitions must have had believers as recently as the present century.

Although we no longer give credence to these fanciful notions, we must at the same time admit that we know little concerning the interior of the earth beneath our feet. By a study of geology we can learn much concerning what is called its crust, but beyond this we can only hazard conjectures as to the composition of its mass. We know that the deeper we descend the shaft of a mine, the hotter does the temperature become. A thermometer registers one degree for about every sixty feet of depth. This observation has led people to infer that if it were possible to pierce the earth for a few miles, a point would be reached where the temperature would be high enough to fuse every known substance. The occurrence in many parts of the globe of hot springs, and the exhibition of volcanic action, have lent aid to these conjectures. In this way the theory came to be adopted that the earth consisted of a spherical shell filled with liquid fire. Of late years this idea has been considerably modified, and the earth is now regarded as something of a far more solid character. But there is no doubt that enormous cavities exist in its mass, which are charged with that molten material which feeds the active volcanoes.

It is perhaps this mystery about the condition of the interior of the globe which has caused men in all times and in all countries to regard anything in the shape of a cavernous opening in its crust with superstitious awe. This tendency exhibits one form of that searching after knowledge, that longing to explore the unknown, which guided Columbus across the Atlantic in spite of the protests of his frightened and mutinous sailors. We see the same tendency even in children at the sea-side, who will do what they can to explore the smallest crevice in the rocks which can by courtesy be called a cavern. We see the same feeling in their elders, who will give such a spot a local habitation under the title of 'the Smugglers' Cave.' It is a nice question whether the lower animals do not to some extent experience a similar longing after exploration, when we see how a terrier will persistently grub away at some disused rabbit-hole, knowing all the time as well as we do that there is no rabbit there.

Whatever the notion be that has prompted men to dwell upon caverns with what may be called the pleasure of mystery, it is very certain that they have filled them with superstitious memories and fanciful legends. Hence we find in the multitudinous fairy tales of all countries, that caverns are made the homes of goblins, gnomes, and all the other beings with whom we made early acquaintance in those golden hours when a fairy tale had a bright reality, and when a goblin was real enough to cause us to think twice before going into a dark room. Let us take, for instance, the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, and see how constantly caverns are employed to give colour to its wonderful pages. What would the story of Aladdin be without its cave of jewels? Where too would Ali Baba have obtained his riches, if he had not stumbled upon that wondrous cavern with its magic pass-word?

Would not the story of Sindbad have lost somewhat of its charm if the travels of that remarkable voyager had all occurred on the upper earth?

From the regions of romance we can descend to those of reality, and note how the worshippers of the god of the Sun celebrated their mystic rites in cavernous recesses—how in India the followers of that Brahma who, with Vishnu and Siva, the other members of the Hindu trinity, was supposed to hold in his almighty hands the powers of good and evil, reverently adored him in their curious rock-cut temples. These temples, originally no doubt but natural openings in the mountains, have been skilfully carved with such intricate ornamentation, that they present all but everlasting monuments of that docile patience characteristic of oriental workmen. They have no doubt been beautified and enlarged by successive generations of fanatic worshippers, until they have arrived at that perfection at which we now find them. Ajunta, Ellora, and Elephanta are the most celebrated places where these rock-cut habitations are found, and altogether it is calculated that India can boast not less than one thousand examples of similar work.

Other parts of the world furnish beautiful examples of cave architecture, of which we may name two—the temple of Ipsamboul, on the banks of old Nile, and that wonderful ruined city of Petra, on the shores of the Dead Sea. This city is supposed to be identical with the Selah of the Scriptures—a stone-cut town, where tombs, temples, and general habitations vie with each other in the beauty of their design and adornments.

But putting aside these ancient monuments of human ingenuity and superstition, which are after all but the work of men's hands, there are far larger and more beautiful caverns in many parts of the globe which are due to natural causes. The first of these causes which we may enumerate is volcanic action, which has done so much in the past by upheaving the surface of the ground and altering its configuration. It is not surprising that such disturbances should result in cavities—blank spaces which may have been upheld, when first formed, by compressed vapours. Such a cavern is the Grotto del Cane near Naples, so called from the circumstance that it still exhales the poisonous vapour of carbonic dioxide, which forms an invisible stratum on its floor, and is fatal to dogs and any small animals that breathe near the surface of the ground. But with this exception, caverns produced by volcanic action are not of any great note, a few only occurring in those regions to which active volcanoes seem now to be relegated. The most striking and picturesque caves which exist still occur in volcanic rocks, although they must be attributed to another cause altogether. Among these we must name that beautiful cavity on the coast of Staffa called Fingal's Cave. This has been scooped out of the hard basaltic rock by the action of that restless excavator the sea. Here we have noble pillars of prismatic form, which rival in their regularity of outline the work of the mason's chisel. It is said that when attention was first directed to this and the other caves upon the island of Staffa—and curious to relate, this was less than a century ago—the theory was gravely propounded that the columns were in reality

petrified bamboos! Where the bamboos had originally come from, did not transpire; but possibly if the author of the conjecture had been pressed upon that point, he might have asserted that they were the remains of the fishing-rods of successive races of anglers who had haunted those parts in bygone days! We need hardly dwell upon the refutation by scientific aids of this comical idea respecting the bamboos—how the philosopher came upon the scene, and proved by direct experiment that it was the nature of this basalt to crystallise in this peculiar form as its stony particles were fused and again cooled—a part of that wondrous law which causes so many things in Nature to adopt regular forms, and which is illustrated in a minor way by a piece of sugar-candy, and more beautifully in those ice-ferns which spread themselves over our window-panes on a frosty morning. In many other parts of the globe we find these curious basaltic columns: in France; on the banks of the Rhine, where occurs another well-known cavern, the *Käse Grotte* or Cheese Grotto, so called because the columns are separated in such a manner as to resemble piles of cheeses; in Iceland; also in some of the West India Islands. In many other countries is exhibited this evidence of past volcanic action.

The caverns which are found on the sea-shore are of course due to that never-ceasing action of the waves which sculpture the hardest rocks into natural bridges and other strange forms. Indeed, were we in this connection to ask: 'What are the wild waves saying?' we might answer: They are telling us that atom by atom they are conveying these rocks to the ocean-bed. The sea is swallowing them up. They will also tell us that these tiny masses of matter are being slowly deposited in the silent depths below, forming new lands, which some day may themselves be scooped out into caverns and hollows by the same agency. The waves will tell us too that there is no part of this earth which has not in time past been below them. And so the endless cycle of changes goes on; waste on the one hand forming the matter by which, on the other, new continents are being built up.

Another class of caves, as numerous perhaps as those which occur on the sea-shore, are known as water-caves. These are caused by the erosive action of fresh water, and partly by chemical action, resulting from certain constituents of such water. The caves of Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and South Devon are of this character. These water-caves are also adding their quota to the lands beneath the sea, by means of the streamlets and rivers connected with them.

The time has long passed since caverns could be regarded with any feelings of superstition; for a very slight acquaintance with the science of geology must make the most inveterate mystery worshipper among us quickly cognisant of the laws to which they owe their origin. But many of these caverns are revealing to us histories which are far more wonderful than fairy tales. We allude to the so-called bone-caves, which in this and other countries are furnishing geologists and the scientific world generally with materials from which they can in somewhat form a history of prehistoric times. Ever since the discovery of the remains of an extinct species of rhinoceros in a cave at Orreton, near Plymouth, have scientific

men turned their attention to caverns and their contents, as to books from which they could learn much of the life which prevailed upon the globe in distant ages. This discovery was quickly followed by others. The celebrated Kirkdale Cave in Yorkshire—stumbled upon by accident—was cleared of the débris with which it was choked up, and yielded results of a high scientific value. Here remains of the elephant, mammoth, and other animals were recognised. Most of these bore the marks of teeth; and the occurrence of the bones of the hyena in greater numbers than those of any other animal, pointed to the inference that this cave had formed the den of successive races of those animals. This hypothesis was strengthened by a comparison of the gnawed bones with those taken from hyenas in confinement at the Zoological Gardens, London, with which they were found to correspond in a remarkable manner. The question how the remains of the larger animals were dragged to these, their last resting-place, being readily accounted for by the known habit which prevails among the lower creation of seeking out some secluded spot at the approach of death.

We some time ago devoted an article to Kent's Cavern at Torquay which, on account of the vast number of bones found there, has become the most celebrated place of the kind in Britain. The fact, too, of the remains of man having been found there gives to Kent's Cavern a natural pre-eminence. The probable age of these ancient men of Devon has given rise to no end of controversies, into which we have no disposition to enter. The gradual growth of the stalagmite upon the floor of the cave, founded upon calculations of its increase within recent years, has on one side been quoted as a kind of undeviating time-keeper by which to gauge the period which has elapsed since the deposit first began. When we consider how this material is formed; how the water, percolating through the soil above, becomes charged with the carbonic dioxide which enables it to hold in solution the lime, which it again gives up in the form of stalagmite, on exposure to the air; when we reflect how atmospheric change, rainfall, and a hundred other minor influences must affect these chemical changes—we must acknowledge that any calculations founded upon the thickness of calcareous deposition must necessarily be subject to error.

To come to the present day. We learn from Dr W. L. Lindsay, in his *Mind in the Lower Animals*, that 'the wild people—the jungle dwarfs—of the Western Ghauts, in the Tinnevely district of India, have no fixed dwellings or dwelling-places. They "sleep in any convenient spot, generally between two rocks, or in caves near which they happen to be benighted." These wild folk of the hill-jungles of the Madras Presidency are in reality modern troglodytes or cave-dwellers, the representatives of those prehistoric men whose remains possess so much interest for anthropologists. The beast-men and wolf-children of India and Europe resemble savage races on the one hand, and many wild animals on the other, in their non-possession of other shelter than that which is afforded by caves or forests. Not only have they no proper dwelling, but there is incapacity for constructing artificial shelter. The wolf-children of India inhabit caves and forests, just as

do the wolves with whom they associate, and by whom it is currently believed they are, in some instances at least, brought up. "At the Lucknow madhouse," says Gerhardt, "there was an elderly fellow . . . who had been dug out of a wolves' den by a European doctor."

'Even in civilised Scotland of the present day we have a race of cave-dwellers in Caithness-shire, whose mental characteristics have been described by Dr Arthur Mitchell. And in the large cities of England there are hosts of waifs and strays of society—of gutter-men and children—of tramps of all kinds, who sleep under railway arches or in other equivalents of caves. In Scripture times too, man dwelt frequently under trees, stones, or rocks, or in caves.

'If the nature of man's dwelling is to be regarded as any reflex of his degree of mental development, much cannot be said for the present mental status, the constructive skill, of the hut-builders and dwellers of our own Scottish and Irish highlands and islands. The hovels of the Hebridean Islanders, for instance, are no advance on those of many savages, and are not equal, *mutatis mutandis*, to the nests of many birds. Thus, when compared with them, the bowers of the bower-bird appear at a decided advantage.'

THE BELLS OF YARRICK.

A PROSE IDYLL, IN THREE SCENES.

SCENE II.

THE interior of a bungalow at Allahabad. A large uncarpeted room, bare-walled; a French window opening into a deep-set veranda, whose roof, protruding some twenty feet from the main body of the building, seems powerless to mitigate the intense heat within. Lying back in a great cane easy-chair, apparently overcome by exertion, is a young officer who has just donned his regimentals; his figure is emaciated, his face pallid. Moving about quietly and unobtrusively, winding up such details as are necessary preparatory to departure, is a deft-handed well-disciplined soldier. Ever and anon he glances anxiously at his young master; but the latter is lost in a reverie, and does not seem to observe him. When all the details appear to be completed, the servant takes a business-like look round, to see that nothing has been overlooked; and then assuming a respectful attitude and saluting, he ventures to speak. 'Beg pardon, sir, but you're scarcely fit to sit a chair yet, much less a horse.'

The invalid turns his face without raising his head from the back of the chair on which it rests. 'I thought we decided not to revert to this again, Denny,' he says decisively. 'My mind is made up. I shall be in the saddle when the roll is called.' His face relaxes into a smile. 'Why, from one point of view this cholera is a positive advantage; I shall ride two stone lighter—two stone if a pound, Denny; and if there's such a thing as gratitude in horse-flesh, Osric is the animal who ought to feel it!' And Gerald Herrick, for it is he, breaks into a rather hollow laugh to express his merriment. Consulting his watch, he adds: 'There is no time to spare; you had better be off and prepare at once. The muster

takes place in half an hour.' And Dennis Ladbrook salutes respectfully and leaves the room.

It is the memorable summer of 1857. Five years have passed away since Gerald Herrick quitted the peaceful scenes of Yarrick; and circumstances appear at last to have combined to give him an opportunity of satisfying his ambition. He had sailed for India. Before he had been there long the times grew out of joint; the complex social machinery no longer ran smoothly as of yore; new forces began to disturb its working, and strong measures were required to avert its threatened collapse. Disaffection had been shewn by the natives, and a great uneasiness had spread over the dependency. It was no time to waver, and the dispersed community which held India had shewn a bold front, tightening their grasp and rigidly enforcing discipline. For a time the disaffected had sullenly complied; but when it was noised abroad that one of the native regiments had disbanded itself, it was the signal for open revolt. The news spread rapidly, igniting slumbering disaffection east and west, and south and north; it passed like a shiver through the scattered English community, and they girded up their loins for the tussle which they saw had become inevitable. Then the storm burst, and each day brought with it sickening repetitions of bloodshed. It was a time for action, and strong hands prepared to do the bidding of clear brains—for the display of heroism, and heroism was forthcoming. The story of eventual success, hewn step by step against great odds and seemingly insuperable difficulties, stands out in letters of gold in military annals. Nana Sahib laid siege to Cawnpore, and the native regiments of that town dispersed to his camp. Those who were left in the doomed city determined to sell their lives dearly, and they accordingly set grimly to work. The ground, baked as hard as iron by the scorching heat, thirsted for rain, and no rain came; the workers, nothing daunted, pulverised it, dug trenches, and endeavoured to throw up earthworks; but the dust could not be made to cohere; and the only result obtained after incessant toil was a series of banks varying from three to five feet in height—a sorry defence against the Nana's guns and the overwhelming numbers of the besiegers. The tale of the awful time of privation and suffering which followed has been oft told—of how the wounded and dying were by stress of circumstances huddled together without the common necessities of life; of how our countrywomen, fired with an undying enthusiasm, parted with their raiment for gun-wadding, serving it up with their own hands to their grim and smoke-begrimed defenders. When the offer of a safe-conduct in return for capitulation reached the beleaguered, they looked around, and for the sake of those, accepted it. Then came that ghastly massacre of the innocents, which has stamped the Nana's name in letters of blood, to be held up to everlasting execration.

And it was to Cawnpore that Havelock, immediately on his arrival at Allahabad, had determined to push on. To proceed by forced marches in the heat of the Indian summer was no mean undertaking; but in the face of the difficulties with which he was beset the task became stupendous. His force, judged by numbers, was miserably inadequate; his commissariat was disorganised,

all the cattle having been driven off at one fell swoop by marauders; his troops were badly mounted; his artillery deficient; and to crown all, cholera was decimating his ranks. And here it is, on the departure from Allahabad, that we find Gerald Herrick and his faithful servant Dennis Ladbrook. Both are so altered as to be scarcely recognisable. The former is a boy no longer, but a man. The bright young face which gave promise in his youth has not belied its promise; it is developed, matured, refined; but it is also strangely emaciated. Something more than time has been at work here; it is cholera, which for the last six weeks has held Gerald Herrick in its tenacious grasp. A wonderful change too has come about in Dennis Ladbrook. Not the remotest trace of the rustic is left in him; during the period which has elapsed, he has developed into as smart and well disciplined a soldier as Havelock's ranks can boast.

In an hour after the short dialogue between the two has taken place, Allahabad is deserted, and Havelock's gallant band have started with their faces northward for Cawnpore. Many a hollow cheek tells of the dire complaint which has been amongst them; but their eyes are brightened with the fire of that enthusiasm which later is to serve them in such good stead. A halt is made, and shortly afterwards the first brush with the insurgents takes place. It is successful. In a few days Cawnpore is reached; and then Havelock draws up his forces in sight of the Nana's, these being disposed in a great curved line. He determines to advance in open column, to engage the enemy with his main body, and to deploy an ill-spared portion of his force to out-flank them. Like a wild beast brought to bay, the Nana gathers up his strength; he feels that a critical moment in his career is reached, and that should he be unsuccessful now, his dominion will surely totter and fall. The battle begins, and with fluctuating results rages, Havelock's exhausted forces making terrific onslaught. Again and again they charge brilliantly, and make many a determined stand; but the hail of metal from the enemy's guns works terrible havoc, causing them at length to fall back to recoup their shattered ranks. One great piece, played with a deadly precision, cuts line after line through the exhausted column, and it is seen that an attempt, at whatever cost of life, must be made to silence it. A small band, chiefly composed of volunteers from disbanded regiments, have gathered together, and hard by is a little knot of officers holding consultation. Suddenly one, wheeling his horse round, shouts out: 'That gun must be silenced! Will you follow, lads?'

Not a moment's pause; the answer is rattled back by all with a click of the teeth as with one voice: 'We'll follow you to eternity, sir!'

'Then come along!'

With knees glued to their saddles, with set jaws, and with bared sabres, the smoke-begrimed band dash forth from the main body, thundering towards the earthworks and the cannon's mouth, resolute to do or die. And in this band are Gerald Herrick and Dennis Ladbrook. Gerald feels that his last hour is come; but though the terrible exertion has been too much for the cholera-racked frame, the resolute spirit supports it to the last, and a fine enthusiasm lights up his face as

he dashes forward at the head of the little band of heroes. And now the gun is neared, though half the number have been mown down in the death-chase across the open; and Gerald, waving his sword, rises in his stirrups and plunges into the bristling array of bayonets, his comrades pressing up close behind. The brilliant dash of the little force is not to be withstood; the natives regard them as fiends incarnate, and with a parting volley from their muskets, turn and flee. For a few brief moments all is confusion while the sabres do their grim work. And now, at the first respite, Dennis turns from the mêlée to look for his young master; and with a great pang at his heart, sees only a riderless and terrified charger. In a moment the faithful fellow has dismounted, oblivious of everything but the prosecution of his quest amongst the dead and dying.

The carnage has been terrible; mangled forms and ghastly upturned faces meet his gaze on every side. Over the scene of slaughter hangs a great pall of sulphurous smoke, and there is a pulsation in the air as of the beat of a mighty ground-swell. Below the horizon the sun is sinking like a ball of fire, and the flaming copper-coloured heavens heighten the lurid effect. Threading his way through the débris, Denny sights the beloved form he seeks lying a little way apart, with the head pillowed on a heap of sand, and with the right arm dangling helpless by the side. The face is upturned and livid, and the eyes are closed. In a moment Denny is bending down and raising the head; and the honest fellow's face works with emotion as he gazes into that of his young master. 'Speak to me, for God's sake, Master Gerald!' he whispers huskily, with a great fear clutching at his heart.

At mention of his name, Gerald opens his eyes. 'Faithful to the last!' he murmurs. His servant replies not, for his voice has gone from him. 'Thank heaven! you are here, Denny; but I knew you would come. There is one last service I want of you.'

'Hush, hush! you are not going to leave me,' replies the faithful fellow.

'Yes; it's almost over, Denny. Death has come to me, and it has come as I hoped it would do, whilst I was fighting for my country and not lying in my bed. I've been hit in the chest somewhere, I think, and my voice is going. Bend your ear closer.' The voice, even as he speaks, grows fainter, and Denny's head is bowed to catch the words. After a pause, the dying lad resumes: 'I've been thinking of the old days, Denny; refreshing myself with a dream of the cool green Yarrick meadows.'

'Where I larnt ye rabbitin', dear Ma'aster Gerald!' The reminiscence is too much for Denny, and a great sob shakes his frame.

Gerald's life is ebbing fast, and he does not hear the words; the eyelids have again closed before he resumes. 'You remember that stormy night when the belfry fell?'

'Yes, Master Gerald.'

'And how the Vicar loved his bells? Well, a great wish of my heart has been to replace them; and I hoped that when I got promotion I should be able to save sufficient to enable me to do so. The time for promotion is past; but yet, thank God, I can realise my hope. When I was down with cholera I wrote directions to my cousin

as to the disposal, in the event of my death, of the little I have. It will be mostly yours, such as it is.'

'What is money to me?' wails the faithful fellow.

'Steady, Denny; I haven't much more time.' With an effort the dying lad collects his thoughts. 'The Vicar, as you know, exchanges from Yarrick for a couple of months each year. I want a surprise for him. On your return to England, make your way to my cousin, and ask him to take the Vicar's substitute into his confidence, and get the belfry set up in the Vicar's absence.'

Denny has regained command over himself, and is gazing with adoration into the upturned face. 'O Master Gerald!' is all he says.

'What noise is that?'

'A cheer from our lads. The old colours are going up!'

'Aha! That's well.' Then, after a pause: 'You understand my directions, and will carry them out, Denny?'

'With my life!'

The left hand struggles to move, but Gerald falls back from the effort with a groan. In an instant Denny had raised him, and is pressing the hand to his lips. A smile passes over the drawn features; and the eyes, brightening for a moment, gaze towards the setting sun. 'Tell the Vicar I pictured him listening to my bells!' A rattle in the throat, a red stream from the lungs, and the spirit wings itself into eternity from its shattered tenement.

Half an hour later the patrol is going its round on the ghastly task of inspection. It stops at the figure of a soldier kneeling, as though hewn in stone, by the side of his dead comrade. He is spoken to, but hears not. They touch his shoulder; then he rises as one dazed, and turns his face in dumb agony to the westward. The sun has fallen below the horizon, but the heavens are flushing in delicate rose-colour, and look tenderly receptive, as though receiving some well-loved guest. From the north, a cool breeze has dispersed the sulphurous canopy which for hours has hung over Cawnpore.

THE OLD PART OF NAPLES.

FROM THE FRENCH OF JOHN PETER.

THE stranger who spends a few weeks in Naples seldom strays beyond the principal thoroughfares. The Toledo and the Chiaja are about the only parts of the town he knows. He may perhaps once have sauntered up Foria, and just walked the length of the Strada del Duomo. Naples dwells in his memory as a handsome, well-built city, where foreigners are cheated rather more than elsewhere, and where the loss of his pocket-handkerchief was a common occurrence. The Museum San Martino, and the magnificent view from the jetty of the Villa Nazionale, and the admiration they inspired, are not forgotten. But as a rule, the foreigner knows nothing of the true Neapolitan nor of the old city, whose inhabitants seldom stray beyond its precincts. He has no notion that by the side of the town known to us

all, and which resembles all other large towns, there is another of peculiar aspect, teeming with interest, once visited never to be forgotten, and in its way as striking as Pompeii.

We would fain usher our reader into this old town, unknown to foreigners. Let us take one of the first streets to the right as we go up the Toledo. A few steps off one finds one's self in the midst of narrow streets and lanes, at the utmost fourteen feet wide. There are high houses on each side, which never get a ray of sun except on the top floors; even in summer it is as cool as in a cellar. It is here that the lower orders are seen, not scattered, as in the better parts of the town; but densely crowded, living their every-day life. These folks live as much as possible out of doors. The dark flats and damp basements, where the poor huddle together as many as nine or ten in a room, and where the air is always foul, are dismal dwellings. They therefore live principally in the street; there they have their food at hand, and there they generally take their meals. If a Neapolitan wants milk, at daybreak and at sunset the cowherd and the goatherd pass his door, and he can get his hap'orth warm from the animal. Vegetables are hawked about until ten A.M. Peasants pass his door on donkey-back, seated on the croup of their animals, large baskets piled high with vegetables slung before them. Our friend need only whistle from his window, where a Neapolitan when at home is most frequently found, and the hawker stops; the bargain is struck, chiefly by pantomime; and then a basket is lowered and drawn up with the day's provisions.

Endive of a shiny white like mother-of-pearl, tomatoes of a glossy red, enormous cucumbers, artichokes, cauliflowers, broccoli, each in turn according to the season, with fruit and fish, constitute the food of the people. Meat is dear, and only indulged in on high-days and holidays. The vegetable hawker is hardly out of sight when the fruit-hawker comes round the corner. In August a lad may be seen carrying a basket of figs on his head, the fruit piled gracefully pyramid-shape, and the rim of the basket adorned with a garland of flowers. Next comes a sun-burned, bare-legged fisherman. In one hand he holds his basket, in the other a pail of seawater, with which he constantly sprinkles the fish. Now an individual appears in sight with a copper vessel, poised on his head, full of boiled snails; and now another comes along dragging a hand-barrow, on which stands a caldron full of Indian-corn over a pan of lighted charcoal. As for coffee, you can have a cup for the equivalent to a halfpenny; but chicory is the principal ingredient. If you are thirsty, at the corner of every street the *acquaiole* (water-vendor) will serve you with a glass of iced water flavoured with *zambuco* (spirit of elder-flowers) for a farthing; and in summer, the water-melon vendor for the same figure will cut you a slice of the red-fleshed, black-spotted fruit, so deliciously cooling to the parched palate. In autumn may be had the prickly-pear, ready peeled and daintily stuck upon a tin fork.

You have now had a glimpse of the dirty street, noisy and busy as an ant's nest. In the midst of all this bustle the artisan plies his trade. Generally each separate trade is centred in one locality. In one street shoemakers are at work at their small

tables, set outside the houses; the doors stand ajar, and against the wall is hung a print of St Crispin and his son, the shoemakers' patron saints. In another, coppersmiths abound, and there the sound of the hammer is quite deafening while they beat the red metal into braziers and soup kettles. At the next turn you light upon the dyers, their hands and faces besmeared with divers hues. One man is resplendent in indigo-blue, another in orange, a third is madder-red. There is a street called Grande Giudecca—the old Jewish quarter before their expulsion from the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies—where old clothes are sold. Here amateurs of antiquities may often pick up wonderful bargains. Old Flemish tapestry, brocaded silks such as our grandmothers wore, and old lace may be ferreted out from amongst a lot of the filthiest and most loathsome rags. In one narrow passage the goldsmiths congregate. The huge pearl earrings so highly prized by Neapolitan wet-nurses, and a large assortment of heavy trinkets, gigantic brooches ornamented with red or blue cut-glass, enormous gold and silver rings, &c. glitter in their shop-windows, and may be purchased for very trifling sums. If you chance to stop before one of these shops, you are pounced upon by the owner, who first bewilders you with his volubility, then gently pushes you inside, and seldom lets you alone until he sees that you are quite determined not to make purchases. In the very narrowest and dreariest streets, which are not above seven feet wide, people are not at work; gossiping old wives, dogs, pigeons, chickens, and here and there a turkey tied by the leg, fattening for some feast or other, are the only occupants.

And now let us proceed to examine what are the amusements of the people in these by-ways. In the north, every poor wight knows how to read; but here they are the exception, and those who can, care little about it. It is marvellous to watch them talking and gesticulating by the hour. What about, you will ask? About the lottery, the *terno* (first three winning numbers) drawn last Saturday; the price of provisions; the next fête-day; the miracle of the Madonna; the government. The Neapolitan is a chatter-box and a gambler. Gambling goes on everywhere, under the street-lamp or by moonlight, with greasy cards that look as if they had been used by bygone generations. But gambler though he be, the Neapolitan is sober; though every one drinks wine, and public-houses are numerous. I counted as many as twelve in two small streets running parallel to each other; yet, if one meets a drunken man, the chances are a thousand to one that he is a German or an English sailor, overcome by the heady wine of Apulia. The constant scuffles which take place in the street are one great source of amusement. When a row begins, a crowd assembles, attracted by the screaming which ushers in the fight. Very often it is the women who indulge in a tilt, not always bloodless, with such weapons as a comb or a shoe; the vanquished party goes off into fits, and gets bled at the nearest barber's shop. Quiet, steady-going people meet at the small cafés, where they placidly drink a glass of water and take their *siesta*. The chemist's shop is the rendezvous of the notables of the neighbourhood—the doctor, the parish priest, the monk, or certain of the better-to-do shopkeepers. These worthies never allow themselves to be disturbed

by the noise of the rabble outside. They are scarcely at the trouble of rising to take a peep at the bride in an apple-green or sky-blue gown, turning out for the first time on her husband's arm, or even to kneel on the threshold when the Host is carried past.

Having viewed it by daylight, let us now try to depict Old Naples by night.

The town has been lighted with gas for many years past, but the lamps are few and far between, except in the principal thoroughfares. But now and then one notices a luminous point whence the figures of the passers-by are reflected in dark outline. These well-lighted spots are the stalls of the iced-water and water-melon vendors. The first stand behind a raised table, over which, on both sides, barrels of iced water are suspended; in the front, large lemons are piled, like cannon-balls, one upon another; at the back, a row of bottles, containing different kinds of sirup. These stalls are often very pretty-looking. I noticed one particularly the other day near the Porta Capuano. Above the table a sort of framework was erected, at the top of which there was a picture of the Madonna in a gorgeous frame, lighted by a small lamp; at the sides there were candelabra, supported by gilt figures representing angels; below the cornice, carved decorations, in the shape of fantastic-looking animals, sirens and dragons. White, green, red, and yellow were blended so as to attract attention without being glaring. Nothing could be prettier. The water-melon stalls are much simpler. The whole get-up consists in a table covered with ready-cut melons. Enormous quantities of this refreshing fruit are sold, and the ground is strewn with the green rinds. Neapolitans delight in the play. At the entrance of a small theatre, Punch and Don Nicola are made to hold a dialogue, and attract a crowd with their jests; then the master of the show pockets the puppets and announces the performance, and the mob rushes into the narrow inclosure. The Neapolitan is also fond of the church; he diligently attends the services, and is all submission to the priest's injunctions. I have heard old women repeating the Nicene Creed after the priest, and singing hymns, evidently as if they enjoyed it, though in a dolefully monotonous tone. When preaching is going on, the numerous chapels are crowded; not unfrequently vulgar jokes, worthy of Punch outside, seem to be the attraction.

Let us now continue our nocturnal ramble. As we approach an open space near the Porta Capuano, our olfactory nerves are assailed by the odour of boiling oil or rancid lard. Eels, sardines, &c. are hissing in chorus in huge frying-pans. These delicacies are generally discussed where they are sold, or at some café close by, where the visitors are playing at *scopa* (a game of cards).

But what has happened now? The noisy crowd is suddenly hushed; there are lights in all the windows; the passers-by fall on their knees. One hears the approaching sound of psalm-singing; the parish priest is carrying the Host to a dying man. He has on his priestly garments, and is preceded by lantern-bearers, the vergers following in yellow coats. When the priest has passed, the people rise from their knees, and many of the faithful go with him to the house of mourning.

As the night wears on, the cafés close, the water-

vendor empties his stall, the melon-vendor carries off his table. But the street is not yet deserted. A man with a guitar is singing some popular song. The neighbours flock around, listen to the music, and sometimes fall asleep on the ground. People still come and go; the street is never empty; a breath of air at night is so refreshing after a sultry day, and every one has enjoyed his siesta. At last, at about one o'clock, the street is abandoned, the hum of the busy city is hushed, and the Neapolitans are asleep, many of them in the open air. How often have I stepped aside, when ascending one of the many steep streets, to avoid walking over a family who had chosen the pavement for their dormitory. Mattresses were spread on the ground, and father, mother, and children were all fast asleep and snoring. Without any sort of preparation, people sometimes lie down in the first corner and go to sleep. Match-vendors, cigar-end collectors, and peasants may constantly be seen sleeping on church steps or at street corners on the bare ground, and seem none the worse for it.

Old Naples is at rest. We take our leave. But after rambling so long through the narrow dirty streets, we long for air and space. A few steps off to the right, and we are on one of the quays which gird the city. How lovely the sea looks in the quiet summer night! The moonlit waves sparkle in the distance. On the horizon, Capri and Cape Misenum stand out in all their beautiful grace of form. Fishermen with their boats, plying their calling by torchlight, are passing to and fro. The sea-breeze is refreshing. We are overpowered with fatigue; we have had a long walk. Our attention has been constantly on the stretch; we need rest. Let us go home; it is late. Good-night!

DR BISTOURY'S NIGHT-WATCHMAN.

'TELL you what, Doctor; you'll be getting robbed and murdered one of these days; you will, upon my word!'

'Hardly, my boy. You ought to know by this time that it's the province of us doctors to kill other people, not to be killed ourselves.' And with a thick chuckle at his own wit, Dr John Hunter Bistoury settled himself comfortably in his chair, and began to peel his third orange as carefully as if he were taking off a limb.

When the Doctor first came to New York, thirty years before, he had been in no way burdened with riches; but his face had proved his fortune in a different sense from that of the over-candid milkmaid in the song. The mere sight of that round, florid, jovial visage, in every crease of which a joke or a good story seemed to be lurking, was a cordial in itself, and appeared capable of reviving the most hopeless invalid without the aid of medicine at all. Mindful of the human weakness which makes so many worthy people regard their own ailments as a kind of personal distinction, the lessening of which in any way is a direct insult to themselves, Dr Bistoury skilfully took a middle course between alarming his patients by an over-serious view of their case, and offending them by appearing to make light of it. In this way he had acquired an enormous practice; and his reputation

now stood so high, that the mere éclat of his name had sufficed to sell an entire edition of his great work upon *The Mutual Relations of Mind and Body*, in which he proved to his own satisfaction, if not to that of all his readers, that all criminal impulses whatever, and indeed the very existence of sin itself, are wholly due to 'a morbid action of the physical system'—that a murder may be prevented by the timely use of Epsom salts, and an unbeliever converted by a judicious contemplation of the virtues of quinine.

'I can assure you, my dear Harry,' resumed the genial Doctor, 'that it's amazingly flattering to me to find myself considered worth robbing at all. No thief would have thought me worth a centre-bit in the days when your poor father—as fine a fellow, Harry, as ever breathed—used to come and sup with me upon biscuits and toasted cheese in my little snuggerly down town. And then, as surely as the time came to go, he'd turn to me and say: "Now, Jack, old boy, won't you think better of it, and let me write you a cheque—just to give you a fair start, you know?"' But although I knew well enough that he'd have been only too glad to do it, I had to refuse; for my motto is, "Heaven helps those who help themselves!"'

'A motto which you'll find some black-masked gentleman exemplifying in this very house one of these nights,' growled Harry Everett. 'Look here, Doctor; I'm not joking—I'm not indeed! Everybody knows you're a rich man; and it's got abroad that there's a room in your house which is always shut up; the very thing to make people think there must be something very valuable stowed away there; and yet after all that, you go living in this big house without a soul near you except the cook and Old Sam yonder, who wouldn't be worth a cent in a real scrimmage!'

'Well, my boy,' said the Doctor, with a curious smile, 'would it tranquillise your mind if I were to engage a night-watchman?'

'I should think so. That would be just the thing.'

'Very good. Consider it done.'

This room, of which Harry had spoken as being 'always shut up,' was a standing puzzle to the Doctor's few intimates. Not a man of them had ever crossed its threshold; and its master, when questioned on the subject, answered only by some joking evasion. Rumour whispered that one adventurous gentleman, rendered desperate by his wife's threat to give him no peace till he found out 'what Dr Bistoury kept hid in that room of his,' had actually attempted a burglarious entrance; but the attempt, if ever made, had been unsuccessful. It is needless to say that countless conjectures, and not a few heavy bets likewise, were being constantly made respecting the contents of this Bluebeard chamber. Many declared that the Doctor had fitted it up as a private laboratory, in the hope of discovering the Philosopher's Stone. Others were equally positive that it contained the hoardings of his whole life in American gold, his opinions being notoriously of the 'hard-money' order. A rival practitioner, of a somewhat cynical turn, suggested that it must contain the remains of the unfortunate patients who had perished under 'that fellow Bistoury's' ministrations; and one imaginative

lady, deeply read in *Jane Eyre*, stoutly maintained that the Doctor, in imitation of the hero of that famous work, had immured his wife in this mysterious *oubliette*, in order to enjoy unchecked the freedom of a bachelor life. Against this ingenious theory there was only one thing to be said—the Doctor had never had a wife to immure. This flagrant treason against the sex was the more unpardonable, inasmuch as he had had abundant opportunities of changing his condition, had he but chosen to avail himself of them. To most of those who questioned him on the subject, he replied that he was wedded to his profession, and that any other union would be flat bigamy; but to his friend Harry Everett, in a moment of after-dinner confidence, he told a very different story.

'My medical cousin Alice was the woman who ought to have been Mrs Bistoury, and an admirable fellow-practitioner she would have made for me. The way in which she once cut a splinter out of my thumb, did equal honour to her hand and her heart; and when she was only thirteen, she bought a skeleton with her uncle's birthday gift of five dollars' [a fact], 'and articulated it in a manner that was really masterly. But in an evil hour, she became tainted with a fancy for homeopathy; and after that, of course all was over between us. Such is life!'

The Doctor's agreement to engage a night-watchman quieted Harry's apprehensions for the time being; but a few weeks later, he returned to the attack once more. 'I say, Doctor, have you got that night-watchman yet?'

'Yes; some time ago.'

'Well, he don't seem to do his duty then, for I've passed this way at all hours of the night, and never seen him. Are you quite sure he's to be trusted?'

'Wait and see!' replied the Doctor oracularly.

And Everett waited, but did not see. The invisible watchman remained as invisible as ever; and Harry, out of patience with his old friend's seeming infatuation, had almost decided to take some decisive step on his own authority, when a new complication introduced itself into the drama. This was nothing less than the temporary retirement of the Doctor's veteran man-servant—popularly known as 'Old Sam'—whose health had begun to give way so manifestly, that his master insisted on sending him into the country for a three months' holiday, replacing him with another man, who had volunteered as promptly as if he had been keeping his eye on the place for a year past. The new-comer was a grave, smooth-faced, taciturn man, who moved as noiselessly as a shadow, and seemed a living combination of the two proverbial requisites of a good servant, silence and obedience.

But although the Doctor and his friends highly approved of this model domestic, there was one man who did not. That one was Harry Everett, who lost no time in announcing his opinion. 'Look here, Doctor. I don't want to be always bothering you about this robbery idea; but it's a fact that that new fellow of yours is up to some mischief. I was coming home pretty late last night, when I caught sight of him standing at the garden-gate, talking to a couple of men. One of them happened to turn his face to the lamp-light as I passed, and I knew him at once for a

noted thief, who goes by the name of "Badger Bill."'

'Indeed? Are you sure of that?'

'Quite sure. You know I never forget a face I've once seen.'

'Ah! In that case, it's time for me to act.' The last word was so curiously emphasised, that Harry, who was not wanting in shrewdness, began to suspect that his persistent warnings to the Doctor had been superfluous after all, and that the old gentleman was quite equal to the emergency.

This suspicion was confirmed one evening about a week later, when the Doctor dropped in upon him unexpectedly, saying: 'Give me some dinner, my boy. You've no engagement for this evening, I know; so I'm going to be very benevolent, and find you some amusement myself.—Have you ever read *The Count of Monte-Cristo*? because you're going to see a chapter of it dramatised to-night, and pretty effectively too, I flatter myself.'

'What do you mean?' asked Everett, staring.

'Why, you see, I told my servants, a few days ago, that I should be away from home to-night, and my cook naturally seized the chance of getting leave for an "evening out;" consequently, the house will be under the sole charge of that worthy man-servant of mine, against whom you're so unaccountably prejudiced. It's quite possible that the two honest gentlemen with whom you saw him talking the other night, may be kind enough to enliven his solitude with a visit; and so'—

Harry sprang to his feet, and cut a caper worthy of a dancing dervish, snapping his fingers by way of accompaniment. 'Capital! first-rate! I see it all now! But come now, Doctor; why on earth couldn't you tell me before that you were up to the whole game, instead of letting me make a fool of myself by preaching to a man as smart as any six of me?'

'Never mind, my boy,' said the Doctor, laughing. 'Your warning was kindly meant, all the same. Eat your dinner—you'll want it before the evening's over, I can promise you—and then we'll have our talk.'

Dinner over, the Doctor lit one of the incomparable cigars which were his sole luxury, and proceeded to expound his plan of action. 'I've locked up the outer room that opens into my mysterious chamber, which puts two strong doors between it and the robbers. My estimable servant will warn them of this, and they'll try the window instead. He'll let them in by the garden-door, and give them the old ladder that lies beside it to mount by. We'll hide in the stable, which—thanks to my keeping my brougham elsewhere—has been unused so long that no one would dream of suspecting it; but I can open the door easily enough. And then'—

'And then,' broke in Harry eagerly, 'we'll go for them the minute they appear. It'll be a fine chance to try my new revolver.'

'Better leave it at home,' said the Doctor quietly; 'we shall want no weapons for this job.'

'Why, are you going to mesmerise the fellows?' asked Everett, completely mystified.

'Wait and see,' chuckled the Doctor. 'We needn't be there till eleven, for my honest domestic will make sure, before giving the signal,

that I'm not coming back; and besides, an experienced burglar seldom begins work till after midnight. The only thing to be sure of is that nobody sees us getting in.'

But in this, fortune favoured them; and as the Doctor had foretold, the lock of the stable-door, rusty as it looked, moved without difficulty, and the two conspirators glided in, unseen and unheard.

Wearry, weary work, crouching there in the darkness, with ear and eye strained to the utmost for the first sign of the coming danger. Dr Bistoury's practised nerves bore even this prolonged trial easily enough; but to the impulsive, excitable Everett it was absolute torture. Like all young soldiers, he found the suspense before the action infinitely more trying than the fray itself. The stable opened on the street close to the garden-door, and its farther window, at which the two watchers had posted themselves, commanded the whole side of the house, the blackness of which was relieved only by a solitary light in one of the upper windows. Suddenly the light vanished, and reappeared a moment later—a performance repeated three times in quick succession.

'That must be the signal,' whispered the Doctor. 'Keep your ears open, Harry.'

Courageous as Everett was, he felt his pulse quicken, and his hand went instinctively to the revolver which, despite the Doctor's verdict, he had persisted in bringing with him.

'Hark! Was that a stealthy footstep outside?'

The next moment came a low whistle, instantly answered from the house; and then a shadowy figure, issuing from the building, glided noiselessly to the garden-door, and opened it to admit two others.

'They've got the ladder,' whispered Dr Bistoury, as the three phantoms crossed the garden. 'Be on the look-out, my boy; you're going to see something worth seeing!'

The ladder was soon planted against the mysterious window; and Badger Bill, after whispering to his comrade to 'keep an eye' on their worthy confederate, ascended, and cutting out a pane so dexterously that the sound was barely audible, put his hand through and shot back the hasp. His two assistants mounted after him; and Bill, stepping cautiously into the room, turned the 'bull's-eye' of his lantern upon its interior.

Instantly the treacherous servant recoiled with a stifled cry: 'Ain't that a—a coffin over yonder?' whispered he tremulously. 'Good gracious! suppose there should be a dead man in it, and'—

'S'pose you should be a thunderin' big fool!' growled Bill savagely. 'Shut your mouth, will yer, or thar'll be another dead man somewhar round soon. I'm a-goin' right in—I am!' And he stepped resolutely forward.

Crash! the coffin-lid burst open, and a skeleton, thrown out in ghastly relief by the red light that flamed in its eyeless sockets, started up with a hideous rattle, thrusting forward its bony arms and grinning jaws as if about to spring upon them. The *Sauve qui peut* of Napoleon was not more decisive. The honest servant gave one yell sufficient to wake the whole neighbourhood, and rolled on the floor in convulsions. The second burglar, leaping backward, dashed his head with such force

against the corner of a bureau, that he dropped as if felled with an axe; while Badger Bill, making a frantic rush for the window, overturned the ladder, and fell crashing along with it, breaking his leg in the fall.

'You see now, Harry,' said the Doctor, as they went up-stairs after seeing their unbidden guests marched off by the police, 'that my night-watchman *did* know his duty, although there's nothing more unearthly about him than a few concealed springs, which are released upon the approach of any one, and a little phosphorus. As for this wonderful room, you see it's only a laboratory after all. But the stories that people told about it amused me so much, that I must plead guilty to having given them a good deal of encouragement. Now, let us be off to bed; and I think you may sleep in peace after this, for it strikes me it'll be some time before anybody robs my house again.'

And indeed, no one has ever attempted it since.

BREAD AND BISCUITS.

BREAD, as we all know, is the staff of life, and is a necessary at every meal; but there are some things not so generally understood regarding this important article of diet. From its porousness and easy digestibility, bread is better adapted than anything else for mixing with and separating the other substances which we eat; and it is extremely nutritive as well. One pound of bread contains more nitrogen than a pound of pork. In England and Europe generally, bread is of two kinds—fermented, and unfermented or aerated; and in most European countries it is made from wheat flour. Wheat consists practically of two parts—the bran or outer covering, and the central grain or fecula; and it is according to the quality of the grain and the amount of husk left in it after sifting, that the value of the flour varies. There are four classes of flour: (1) Fine households or the best; (2) households or seconds; (3) brown meal; and (4) biscuit-flour.

The whiteness of the flour is generally, but not always, a test of its purity and nutritive value; for the finest flour sifted from red wheat is of a darker tinge than 'seconds' obtained from white wheat, though the red wheat is more nutritious. The nutritive value of bread depends chiefly upon the flour from which it is made, but also upon the process by which it is made. For some constitutions, white bread is best; for others, brown; and for others again, aerated.

Of fermented breads, the two most wholesome kinds are brown bread and that made from 'seconds' flour. Pure white bread made from the finest households is not so nutritious as that made from 'seconds' flour, and for this reason: 'seconds' flour contains a portion of the husk, and is therefore endowed with all the most important substances required to form blood, bone, and muscle—namely gluten, starch, oil, and a large proportion of mineral materials; so that bread made from this flour is more valuable in point of nourishment than bread made from the finest flour, from which the phosphates, &c. have been entirely extracted.

It is therefore a great mistake to remove all the husk or bran from the flour, except for delicate people.

There was much talk some years ago about the nutritive value of brown bread, some medical men asserting that it was more nutritious than any other kind of bread. Time and experience, however, have shewn its true value. Bran and pollards, in which there is a considerable quantity of phosphate of lime, so valuable as nutriment to the bones and other tissues, of course predominate in brown bread, but they have all the wheaten elements besides. To some people, however, bran and pollards are too irritating, especially to those with delicate organisations; and as most of us can take the necessary phosphates in other ways, brown bread need not be eaten indiscriminately by every one because of its nutritive value.

It is quite impossible for the system to assimilate the bran; though, like cheese, its presence in the stomach stimulates the digestion of other things. Brown bread is very useful for its laxative properties, and these render it very beneficial to persons of sedentary habits, or whose occupations preclude them from taking much exercise in the open air.

A delicious sauce may be made from brown bread, the preparation being the same as that for white-bread sauce. It is not very widely known; but mixed with one or two cooked tomatoes, forms a most palatable addition to a joint of roast mutton.

The bread par excellence, however, according to the majority of medical men, is aerated bread. A patent for the making of this bread was taken out about fifteen years ago; but since then it has not enjoyed nearly the popularity and consumption that it really deserves. It has many decided advantages, and is a considerable saving in many ways. 1. More bread is made out of one sack of flour by this process than by any other. 2. It takes much less time to make. 3. The dough requires no handling. 4. It is perfectly pure, being simply flour, water, and salt. 5. The cost of machinery and the carbonic acid gas is much less than that of the yeast used in the fermenting process. It is very strongly recommended by medical men for ordinary diet and in cases of indigestion. According to Dr Corfe of the Middlesex Hospital, it is particularly valuable 'in those cases of dyspepsia which so often affect the brain-workers of the great metropolis, men who work for the press, &c.' Again, infants brought up partially or entirely by hand thrive especially well on it. Aerated bread mixed with a little milk-and-water forms a soft jelly-like compound, and is then easily sucked through the tube of a common feeding-bottle.

Beyond these advantages, the general introduction of aerated bread would be a decided gain from a humanitarian point of view, for it would save a large number of human lives now annually sacrificed in London bakeries alone. Dr Guy affirms that no class of men, save the Redditch needle-grinders, are liable to so severe and often fatal diseases of the chest as the men employed in bakeries. Forty-two years is rather more than the average duration of their lives. Aerated bread besides keeps better than bread made from yeast, and this proves its superiority over fermented bread, for it is a well-known fact that the best

bread grows stale slowest. The difference between fresh and stale bread is owing to the condition of the starch in a loaf. But when the starch has hardened, the defect may be easily remedied by inclosing the loaf in a tin case and placing it in an oven for a short time, after which the stale loaf reappears a fresh one.

A word as to a test for good bread. A loaf should be of a perfectly even texture, of uniformly small holes like a fine sponge. If its texture is good, and its layers can be easily detached, and it can be crumbled by the fingers into a coarse powder, or thoroughly soaked in water, it is perfectly made and baked. If not, there is a fault somewhere, and it is either adulterated or imperfectly baked.

In conclusion, a word as to the well-known variety of bread called biscuits may not be out of place. There is no yeast in the composition of biscuits; they are unleavened and very highly dried; and it is this which makes them so invaluable to people who suffer from a superabundant amount of adipose tissue. Biscuits are rather too hard for an every-day bread-stuff if made from flour and water alone, as 'captains' and ship-biscuits are. But they are very useful to travellers where bread is bad or unattainable. If soaked for a few hours in water or, better still, milk, they soften, swell, and with the addition of a little cream and sugar, make a very delicious and palatable dish. When kept dry and free from the air, biscuits possess the immense advantage of allowing to be stored for use for a great length of time. Lately, there has sprung up an important trade in biscuits contained in close tins for domestic use. The sale of these tins of English biscuits of different sorts has become quite immense. They are seen in the shop-windows of grocers all over the continent.

THE ROSE AND BIRD.

A BIRDLING sang upon the spray,
What time the lanes were white with May;
Sweet rose his thrilling, tender tune;
Ah! how he welcomed sunny June.

A crimson rose, her dewy head
Upreared from her green, leafy bed,
Toward the blue and cloudless sky,
And thus she murmured with a sigh:

'O that for ever June would last,
Nor be the heavens e'er o'ercast;
That storms and gales should own no sway,
My life be one long summer day.'

Dark grew the sky; the rain fell fast,
And thunder mingled with the blast;
The birdie cowering ceased his mirth,
The rose fell crushed and torn to earth.

Thus is it ever! When we dream
No danger nigh, and safe we seem,
Just Heaven checks our boastful pride,
And sends the peril we denied!

A. H. B.

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